DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 357 672 HE 026 418

AUTHOR	O'Brien, Eileen M.
TITLE	Outside the Classroom: Students as Employees, Volunteers, and Interns.
INSTITUTION	American Council on Education, Washington, D.C. Div. of Policy Analysis and Research.
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	14p.
AVAILABLE FROM	American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036 (published 8 times yearly: $58 for 1 year; $105 for 2 years; $149 for 3 years).
PUB TYPE	Reports - General (140) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	ACE Research Briefs; v4 n1 1993
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Comparative Analysis; *Education Work Relationship; Employment; *Experiential Learning; Higher Education; Part Time Students; Research Needs; Student Experience; Student Participation; Student Volunteers; *Undergraduate Students; Undergraduate Study; Work Experience

ABSTRACT

Many college students today are combining their undergraduate studies with some type of paid employment, volunteer work, or internship experience. Estimates show that more than 60 percent of undergraduate students work in paid positions; as many as 26 percent serve as volunteers; and almost 25 percent of undergraduates participate in internship/cooperative work. This paper, which limits its analysis to undergraduate students, summarizes the data available on working students and then compares them with students who do not work. Also reviewed is the limited research on students involved in community service or volunteer work and in internships or cooperative positions, as well as an analysis of how students balance these activities with their studies. Recommendations are offered for further research. Among the findings are the following: (1) in 1991, 63 percent of all college students were employed while enrolled in school, representing a steady increase over the past few decades; (2) in 1990, 26 percent of undergraduates said they were currently performing community service; and (3) surveys are showing that student volunteers are more likely to be women (36 percent are females versus 27 percent males), and older (41 percent of students aged 30 years old or older volunteer compared with less than 30 percent of students under 30 years of age). (Contains 19 references.) (GLR)

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ED357672

RESEARCH BRIEFS Volume 4, Number 1 • 1993

Division of Policy Analysis and Research
American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

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HE026418

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Division of Policy Analysis and Research
American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

Outside the Classroom: Students as Employees, Volunteers, and Interns

Eileen M. O'Brien

Today's typical college student no longer simply attends classes, writes papers, and takes exams; most students now combine their undergraduate studies with some type of paid employment, volunteer work, or internship experience. Estimates show that more than 60 percent of undergraduate students work in paid positions; as many as 26 percent of students serve as volunteers; and almost 25 percent of undergraduates participate in internship/cooperative work.[1] Most experts agree that this population will continue to grow as students face rising college costs and look for ways to prepare themselves for careers.

This research brief, which limits its analysis to undergraduate students, summarizes the data available on working students and then compares them with students who do not work. The limited research on students involved in community service or volunteer work and in internships or cooperative positions also is reviewed. This brief also analyzes how students balance these activities with their studies, and offers recommendations for further research, especially in light of current national service proposals.

HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

- In 1991, 63 percent of all college students were employed while enrolled in school.
- This population has increased steadily over the past few decades; in 1979, 51 percent of college students worked, and in 1969, 43 percent did so.
- In 1990, 26 percent of undergraduates said they were currently performing community service. These students reported working on average 5.3 hours per week in such activities.
- Surveys show that student volunteers are more likely to be:
  - —women (36 percent of female students vs. 27 percent of male students volunteer);
  - —older (41 percent of students aged 30 and older volunteer, compared with less than 30 percent of students under 30).
- Somewhat suprisingly, students who work are more likely to volunteer than those who do not. One survey found that 37 percent of students who worked between 1 and 15 hours were volunteers, yet only 29 percent of students who did not work were volunteers.

The number of students who work is expected to increase, as students continue to balance their financial needs with their desire to improve their career prospects. Paid employment, volunteer opportunities, and internship/cooperative situations all encourage students to apply classroom learning to "real world" situations.

However, more research is needed to understand and evaluate the experience of working students in undergraduate programs. The increase in the number of students working suggest that previous studies on persistence and degree completion rates for these students should be updated. Although studies on the academic achievement of working students indicate few negative impacts, we need more comprehensive, long-term studies that examine persistence among this growing student population.

Eileen M. O'Brien is a Research Analyst in the Division of Policy Analysis and Research at the American Council on Education.

Students as Employees

While most college students typically have worked during their summer breaks, research shows that more and more students are working as they pursue their studies.

- In 1991, 63 percent (almost 8.7 million) of all college students were also working, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (table 1).[2]
- This proportion has increased steadily over the past few decades — in 1979, 51 percent of all students worked; in 1969, 43 percent did so.

The increase in the number of working students is due largely to growth in the non-traditional student population.

- Among students in the traditional college age range (16 to 24), the proportions who work are not as high, and have not increased as dramatically. For example, 53 percent of college students age 16-24 were employed in 1991, up from 46 percent in 1979.
- Working students tend to be older than their non-working peers: 37 percent of working students were above the age of 25, while only 29 percent of students who did not work were older than 25.

Most students who work attend college on a part-time basis, yet more full-time students are also working, as well.

- In 1991, 86 percent of part-time students were employed.
- Just under half (47 percent) of full-time students were working in 1991, up from 39 percent in 1981.

Students at two-year colleges are more likely to work than students at four-year institutions:

- In 1991, 68 percent of students at two-year colleges were working, compared with 47 percent of students at four-year colleges (BLS, 1992).

For an even clearer picture of working students, the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, provides a snapshot of all undergraduates. The 1990 NPSAS shows many differences between students who worked and students who did not work (table 2).

- In February 1990, 7.3 million students (66 percent of all students) were enrolled in college and employed, compared with 3.8 million non-working students.[3]
- Of those undergraduates who worked, 5.8 million (80 percent) attended public institutions; 1.1 million (16 percent) attended independent institutions; and 309,000 (4 percent) attended proprietary schools.
- In comparison, of enrolled students who did not work, 2.9 million (75 percent) were at public institutions; 711,000 (19 percent) were at independent colleges; and 259,000 (7 percent) were at trade schools.

Table 1

Students At Work, 1991
(in thousands)

	Total Enrolled	Total Employed	Percentage
Students 16-24	8,294	4,412	53%
Students 25 and older	5,529	4,257	77%
Total	13,823	8,669	63%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Annual School Enrollment Status and Labor Force Participation of High School Graduates and Dropouts Survey," 1992.

Table 2

A Snapshot of Students who Work
February, 1990

Undergraduates who	Work	do not Work
Students who work are:		
more likely to be women ...		
Women	55%	57%
Men	45%	43%
concentrated at public institutions ...		
Enrolled at public institutions	80%	75%
Enrolled at independent institutions	16%	19%
Enrolled at proprietary institutions	4%	7%
less likely to fall into the traditional college-age range...		
Between ages 18 to 24	63%	69%
Between ages 25 to 40	28%	22%
Above 40	9%	8%
more likely to be independent ...		
Independent status	51%	39%
Dependent status	49%	61%
more likely to come from families with incomes lower than $40,000 ...		
income less than $20,000	37%	37%
income $20,000 to $39,999	31%	25%
income more than $40,000	31%	38%
less likely to receive any federal aid.		
received any federal aid	25%	32%
did not receive federal aid	75%	68%

Note: Details may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, unpublished data tabulations.

The Federal Work-Study Program

One major source of funds for working students is the Federal Work-Study program (FWS), previously known as the College Work-Study Program, which provides federal funds to colleges and universities to subsidize student employment. However, this program suffered sizable budget decreases during the 1980s, and only recently did its funding begin to recover.

- From 1984 to 1989, total funding for the program decreased steadily.
  - — In 1984, $615 million was awarded to 660,000 undergraduates who participated in FWS, with average earnings of $931.
  - — By 1989, funding had dropped to $566 million for a total of 641,000 participants, who earned an average of $883.
  - — However, in 1991, funding increased to $659 million, with 653,000 undergraduates earning an average of $1,008.
- Students at independent four-year colleges account for the largest portion of FWS recipients (43 percent). Other institutions represent the following proportions:
  - — public four-year institutions (37 percent)
  - — public two-year institutions (16 percent)
  - — independent two-year institutions (2 percent)
  - — proprietary institutions (2 percent).
- Students who are financially independent[4] of their parents were more likely to have larger work-study awards than their dependent counterparts ($1,142 vs. $959).
- In 1990, almost 95 percent of students' earnings in the FWS program were from on-campus jobs, according to a study by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO, 1992). Officials from institutions with the largest FWS allocations acknowledged that these jobs often were not related directly to the students' field of study.
- In contrast, while 5 percent of the FWS earnings came from off-campus jobs, these jobs more often were related directly to students' studies (e.g., education majors tutoring elementary school students).

The Federal Work-Study program has a smaller component, called the Community Service Learning program, focused on providing work-study jobs that serve the needs of low-income individuals. Institutions can use up to 10 percent of their FWS allocations for CSL projects.

- However, GAO found that 0.2 percent of FWS earnings in 1990 went to students with CSL jobs. And in the GAO survey of the 20 institutions with the largest FWS funds, only four institutions had a CSL program, with between 1 percent and 4 percent of their FWS funds devoted to these projects.

The number of paid service opportunities should get a boost from a new provision in the Federal Work-Study program, which requires that beginning in 1994, institutions must devote at least 5 percent of their existing federal work-study funds to support students in community service projects.

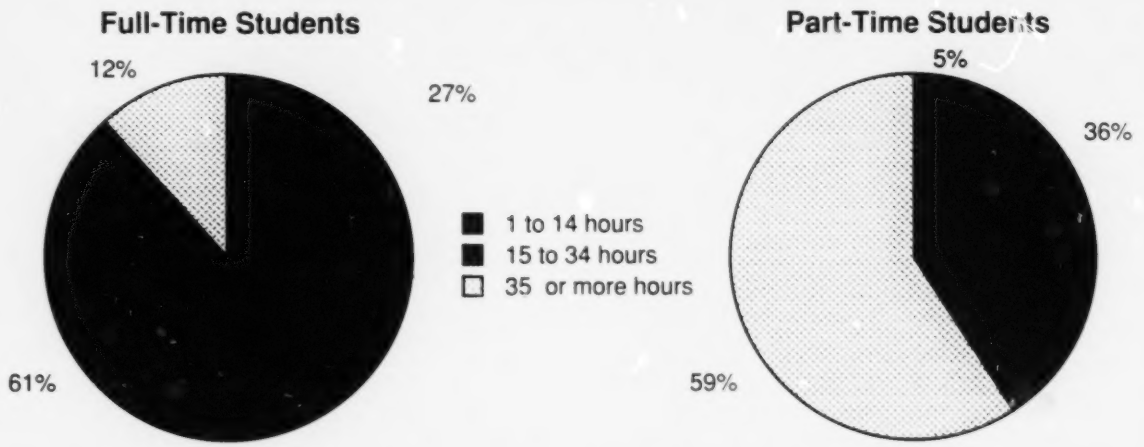
- The proportion of students who worked while attending school varied slightly, according to institutional type:
  - — 67 percent of students at public colleges worked, compared with 62 percent at independent institutions, and 54 percent at proprietary schools.
- These two groups of students did not differ substantially by gender: 55 percent of working students were women, compared with 57 percent of non-working students.
- The proportion of students who also work varied within each racial/ethnic group. Working students represented the following proportions of these racial/ethnic groups:
  - — 62 percent of American Indian students;
  - — 53 percent of Asian Americans;
  - — 61 percent of African Americans;
  - — 66 percent of Hispanics; and
  - — 67 percent of whites.
- Also, another national study of working and non-working students found that upperclassmen were more likely than freshmen to be working (National Association of Student Employment Administrators, 1993). In 1992, this survey found that 47 percent of freshmen worked, compared with 58 percent of sophomores and 61 percent of juniors and seniors.

Full-time students who reported they had chosen applied majors (i.e., business and marketing, computer science, etc.) were more likely to work than students in liberal arts majors (philosophy, physical science).

- For instance, 68 percent of business and marketing students worked while attending college, compared with only 57 percent of philosophy students; 70 percent of computer science students were employed, compared with only 53 percent of physical science students (NPSAS, 1992).
- Only 6 percent of those students who were working reported participating in the Federal Work-Study program, previously known as the College Work-Study Program (see above box on Federal Work-Study Program).

Figure 1

Hours Worked Per Week by College Students Aged 16 to 24, 1991



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Annual School Enrollment Status And Labor Force Participation Of High School Graduates and Dropouts Survey," unpublished data tabulations, 1992.

- Working students were slightly less likely to receive federal student aid; only 25 percent of working students were awarded any type of federal aid, compared with 32 percent of students who did not work. However, these groups differed little in the proportions who received state or institutional aid.

WHY STUDENTS WORK

In 1992, the National Association of Student Employment Administrators (NASEA) surveyed more than 13,000 undergraduates (both working and non-working) and found that both economic and career aspirations motivated students' decision to work while enrolled in school.

- Most students (71 percent) said paying for their education was one of the main reasons they worked. Yet half of the students cited job experience as a motivation, while 42 percent said that establishing contacts was also an important reason they worked.
- On the other hand, students who chose not to work cited concerns that work would interfere with their academic life: 73 percent said that they needed more time for studying, and 55 percent said work would conflict with their class schedule. For these students economic concerns did not lead them to work: 30 percent said they had "no need to work" to pay for their education, and 27 percent said their summer earnings were sufficient.

HOURS WORKED

- In 1991, college students who worked put in an average of 23.8 hours each week (BLS, 1992).
- However, students enrolled part time work longer hours than full-time students (figure 1). According to BLS data, part-time students spent 34.2 hours per week on their jobs, while full-time undergraduates worked an average 20.4 hours per week.
- Male and female undergraduates worked roughly the same amount each week (24.9 hours and 22.9 hours, respectively); and there were no appreciable differences in hours worked by race and ethnicity.
- In contrast to BLS findings, the NASEA (1993) survey found that students worked an average of 15.3 hours per week in 1992. Students who were eligible for Federal Work-Study worked an average of 13 hours per week, compared to 17 hours for students who were not eligible for work-study. Freshman students worked an average of 13 hours per week, compared to 16 hours for upperclassmen.

IMPACT ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Several studies have shown that a student's employment has little negative effect on his or her academic achievement.

- For example, the NASEA survey found no significant difference between the grade point averages of working students (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) and non-working students (2.94).
- Also, a study conducted at a public university found that part-time employment had no adverse effect on the academic performance of first-time freshmen (Curtis and Nimmer, 1991).

One explanation proposed by the authors is that "employed students are forced to budget their reduced free time and schedule specific periods for completing homework assignments."

- In addition, 1989 senior students at Stanford University said paid employment had little impact on their academic life (Stanford University, 1989). Only 3 percent of working students said that work greatly impeded their studies, 26 percent said it somewhat did, and 31 percent said it had no effect. Interestingly, 9 percent said it somewhat enhanced their coursework, and 3 percent said it greatly enhanced their studies.

Students as Volunteers

In 1990, one-quarter (26 percent) of undergraduates said they were involved in volunteer or community service activities, according to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS).[5] But who are these students, and how do they differ from students who do not volunteer? Currently, no national survey specifically examines the characteristics of students who perform community service or volunteer work. With the recent interest in community service generated by the Commission on National and Community Service and by President Clinton's national service proposal, more data may be collected on this group of students.

Efforts to increase student participation in volunteer or service work have evolved from two major initiatives. The first initiative, centered on general community service efforts, seems to have developed largely through the work of policy-makers. These efforts have focused solely on increasing student involvement in addressing community problems, whether on a one-time basis or through a commitment of a few hours each week. Examples include the flurry of service proposals presented by members of Congress in 1989, which eventually led to the establishment of the Commission on National and Community Service, and the Human Corps proposal, the 1987 effort by the California legislature to encourage more college students to volunteer.

The second initiative, known as "service-learning," was advanced primarily by college administrators and service advocates. Service-learning involves a more comprehensive approach to student volunteerism, with service projects offered in conjunction with some type of formal reflection or actual integration into undergraduates' academic courses. Examples include the Federal Student Literacy Corps, the programs offered by the Partnership for Service Learning, and some of the programs conducted by members of Campus Compact (see Resources section). Although the service-learning movement is gaining momentum, most students who participate in service activities are involved in community service projects rather than service-learning programs. (Most of the data included in this brief focuses solely on community service programs.)

WHO IS VOLUNTEERING?

- In 1990, more than one of every four undergraduates (26 percent) was involved in community service, according to the NPSAS survey, which is the best national estimate of students' participation in community service or volunteer work. However, other surveys place the rate much higher, from almost one-third (32 percent), in a 1988 survey of California State University undergraduates (CSU, 1989), to almost one-half (48 percent), in a followup to the *American Freshman* survey (Astin, 1991).[6]

Although data on students' participation in volunteer activities is sparse prior to the mid-1980s, some surveys indicate a rise in student volunteerism.

- For instance, the *American Freshman* survey found that in 1988, 43 percent of all first-time, full-time freshmen had volunteered at least one hour per week in their senior year of high school (Dey et al., 1988, 1992). By 1992, this proportion increased to 54 percent.
- Surveys indicate that female students are more likely to volunteer than male students (figure 2). The CSU survey found that 36 percent of female students had performed community service, compared with 27 percent of males (CSU, 1989).
- The CSU survey noted slight disparities in service participation rates among different racial/ethnic groups.[7] For example, American Indians and whites (35 percent each) were most likely to say they had performed community service, while Asian-Pacific Islanders and Filipinos (21 percent) were least likely.
- Students who were 30 years of age or older were more likely to perform community service (41 percent) than those under 30 (less than 30 percent) (CSU, 1989).
- Few studies have examined differences between full- and part-time students in terms of volunteer work. CSU's survey found that part-time students are just as likely to participate in community service as full-time students. In 1988, 34 percent of CSU students taking 0 to 6 credit hours volunteered; 31 percent of those taking 7 to 11 credits did so; and 31 percent of those taking 12 credits or more participated.

A 1990 followup to the 1986 *American Freshman* survey found that students who attended four-year colleges were more likely to volunteer than students at two-year colleges. Also, students at independent institutions were more likely than students at public institutions to volunteer (Wingard et al., 1991).

- In 1990, 44 percent of students who attended four-year colleges had volunteered that year, compared with 27 percent of those who attended two-year colleges.
- Forty-two percent of students at public universities were volunteers in 1990, while 51 percent of those attending independent universities did volunteer work.

- CSU's survey found differences in service participation according to undergraduate major.
  - — Almost half (47 percent) of students who were enrolled in education programs volunteered; about two of every five interdisciplinary majors, social/behavioral science majors, and professional/technical majors performed community service.
  - — Students who majored in engineering/computer sciences (20 percent), business (23 percent), were undeclared (26 percent), and fine arts majors (27 percent) were the least likely to perform community service (CSU, 1989).[8]
- Not surprisingly, those students who volunteered during high school are more likely to participate in volunteer work in college, according to a recent followup to the *American Freshman* survey (Astin, 1991). However, the survey found much lower participation rates for college students: while 75 percent of 1986 freshmen said they volunteered in high school, just under half (48 percent) of these same students said they participated in volunteer work during college.
- Students who participate in community service work are more likely to come from a high socio-economic background and report their religious preference as Roman Catholic or Jewish (Astin, 1991).
- Undergraduates who are least likely to get involved in volunteer work show strong materialistic motives — they consider "being very well off financially" an important goal and tend to rationalize college attendance in terms of enhanced income (Astin, 1991).

INTERACTION WITH WORK

- Somewhat surprisingly, the CSU survey showed students who work actually are more likely to volunteer than those who do not. Students who worked between one and 15 hours were the most likely to volunteer (37 percent), followed by those who worked 26 to 35 hours (33 percent), 16 to 25 hours (32 percent) and 36 or more hours (32 percent), and those who did not work at all (29 percent).
- At Stanford University, surveys of seniors found community or public service involvement was not affected by work (Stanford University, 1989). Only 9 percent said work greatly impeded their ability to participate in volunteer service, 14 percent said it impeded somewhat, and 41 percent said it had no effect.
- Another survey of seniors from 15 independent colleges and universities found that almost 60 percent of students who worked also volunteered, compared with 55 percent of students who did not work (Pettit, 1991). However, a 25-hour work-week appeared to be the threshold for involvement — the proportion of students who both worked and volunteered dropped off above this level.

HOURS VOLUNTEERED

- On average, those students who performed community service worked 5.3 hours each week in 1990 (NPSAS, 1993).
- Similarly, the CSU student survey found the majority (52 percent) of service participants spent five hours or less per week engaged in community service, with a median involvement of six months (CSU, 1989).
- On average, CSU students who performed community service in 1988 worked approximately 270 hours annually.

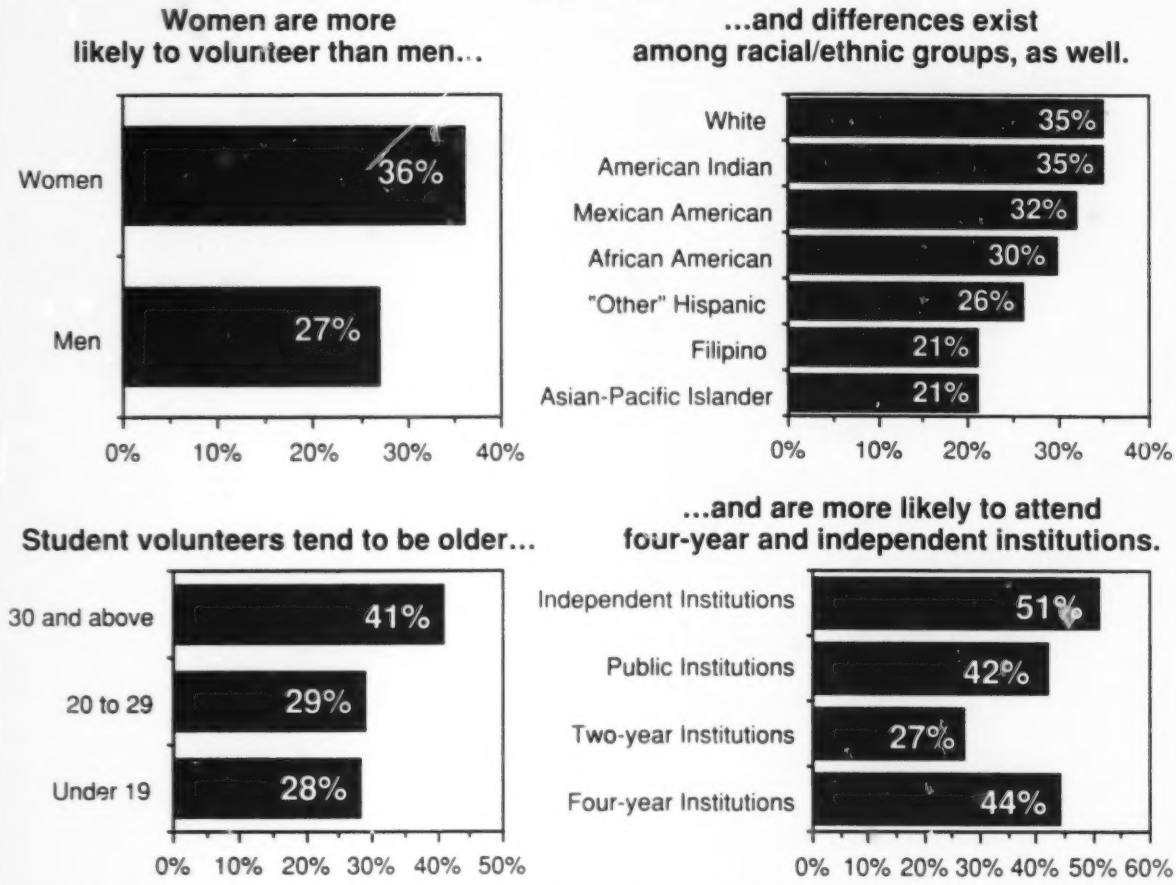
INTEGRATION INTO CAMPUS LIFE

Several community service advocates recommend that proper training, supervision and reflection are essential components of any service activity, especially if the volunteer experience is expected to have any long-lasting impact for the student. As more campuses establish specific offices or centers to coordinate community service and volunteer projects, it appears that many colleges and universities are trying to institutionalize community service efforts and ensure that students have a meaningful volunteer experience (see box on Stanford University, p. 8).

- A high proportion of colleges that belong to Campus Compact report offering courses that integrate service into the curriculum — approximately 81 percent do so (Campus Compact, 1991).
- Campus Compact also found that many non-academic departments coordinate community service efforts, with 65 percent of member institutions noting that student organizations coordinate service projects, and 57 percent reporting that these activities are handled by student services/affairs offices.
- Other evidence of community service's integration into college life beyond academic credit comes from the CSU survey. Almost two thirds of the CSU undergraduates who performed community service indicated that they did so without any kind of academic (course credit) or financial (salary) incentives (CSU, 1989).
- Campus Compact institutions reported involvement in the following types of service programs most frequently: Tutoring, 91 percent; Environment, 78 percent; Elderly, 77 percent; Recycling, 77 percent; Literacy, 75 percent; At-Risk youth, 72 percent; Physically Challenged, 71 percent; Hunger, 70 percent; Homelessness, 70 percent; and Mentoring, 70 percent (Campus Compact, 1991).

Students' participation in community service or volunteer work appears to have long-lasting effects.

Figure 2



Sources: For data on gender, race/ethnicity, and age—California State University, Office of the Chancellor, *A Survey of the Community Service Participation in The California State University, 1988*, Long Beach, CA: CSU 1989. For data on institution type—Wingard, Dey, and Korn, *The American College Student, 1990: National Norms for 1986 and 1988 College Freshmen*, Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA 1991.

- In a followup to the *American Freshman* survey, when students were asked to rate changes within themselves that occurred during college, volunteering was strongly related to the following changes: growth in leadership abilities, cultural appreciation and tolerance of others with different backgrounds (Dey, 1991).
- Also, young adults who volunteer begin a life-long habit, as witnessed by the fact that students who volunteered in high school are more likely to volunteer in college and are more likely to donate time and money to nonprofit causes as adults (Independent Sector, 1992).

A NATIONAL SERVICE PROPOSAL

The Clinton administration recently announced preliminary details of its national service plan to encourage young people to perform needed services in their communities in exchange for pre- and post-college benefits. The proposal calls for the establishment of a national system that will match individuals with pre-approved service programs.

- The program is expected to start as a modest pilot program in the summer of 1993, called a "Summer of Service," for 1,500 young people (including high school graduates and college students). Participants will receive leadership training, work throughout the nation in approved projects serving at-risk children, and then meet at the end of the summer for a Youth Service Summit. They will receive minimum wage stipends and a $1,000 post-service education benefit.
- Beginning in fiscal 1994, the program could be expanded to include 25,000 participants per year, who would engage in service projects before, during, and after college. By fiscal 1997, the program would grow to as many as 150,000 participants.

- All participants will receive minimum wage stipends during their term of service, defined as either one year of full-time service or two years of part-time service. Post-service benefits will be related to participant's service:
  - — Pre-college and college service: High school graduates, non-college bound youth, and college students who participate would receive a post-service benefit of $5,000 for each term of service up to two terms, with these funds to be used for postsecondary education or job training.
  - — Post-college: College graduates would have up to $10,000 of their student loans forgiven for each term of community service (up to two terms).
- The administration expects eligible service projects to focus on education, environment, public health and safety, and human services. The proposal also notes that these labor-intensive tasks for volunteers would not require a college degree and would not displace existing workers.

FUNDING FOR SERVICE PROGRAMS

Currently, most community service projects for college students and graduates are financed by non-profit organizations or institutions of higher education, with some funding from federal, state, and local governments. Preliminary details of the Clinton administration's service proposal indicates that it would dramatically increase the amount of federal funds dedicated to service programs, with $7.4 billion to be spent over the next four fiscal years.[9] Presently, the major federal sources for funding service activities include:

- The Commission on National and Community Service, which awarded 58 grants totaling $5.2 million to colleges and universities, representing 8 percent of the funds awarded in 1992.
- The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) of the U.S. Department of Education, which awards grants for Innovative Projects for Community Service and for research studying the effects of student community service organizations. (In fiscal 1992, appropriations for this program were $1.4 million.)
- The Student Literacy Corps, also run by the Education Department, which awarded $5.3 million in grants in fiscal 1992. Eligible institutions must offer one or more courses for academic credit that train undergraduates to serve as tutors or mentors for illiterate adults or disadvantaged elementary and secondary students.
- In addition, several other programs fund service opportunities for college-age youth, including Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), and the Peace Corps. (Also, see p. 3 for information on Federal Work-Study funds authorized for service projects.)

Public Service: Stanford's Example

Stanford University, a member of Campus Compact, offers an extensive range of community service opportunities for its students, all coordinated through the Haas Center for Public Service. Through the center's efforts, about 2,500 students participate in service projects each year, ranging from one-time opportunities to 11-month fellowships. The center also houses more than 35 student organizations, such as the Stanford Homelessness Action Coalition and the Stanford Hospital Volunteers.

Other center activities include connecting service opportunities to the curriculum — such as the freshman English classes in which students volunteer to write brochures, newsletters, and grant proposals for local nonprofit agencies. Funded by a grant from the Commission on National and Community Service, the center also worked with the School of Education to set up a summer institute designed for faculty, students, school teachers and administrators to develop service-learning curricula and learn evaluation and dissemination techniques.

The Haas Center, established in 1984, appears to be making an impact. Surveys of seniors found that the proportion of students reporting community or public service involvement rose sharply between 1984 and 1989 (Stanford University, 1989).

- In 1989, 42 percent of Stanford seniors said they occasionally participated in community or public service, up from 18 percent in 1984.
- Conversely, in 1989, 14 percent of seniors said they never participated in community or public service, down from 49 percent in 1984.

For more information, contact Tim Stanton, Acting Director, Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University, P.O. Box Q, Stanford, CA 94309-3473.

Students as Interns

Unfortunately, no estimate exists for the number of students who participate in internships each year. The Cooperative Education Association states that 250,000 students participate in cooperative programs each year. A wide range of activities falls under these two types of programs, the main distinctions being that internships offer students work experiences that are typically of a shorter duration (usually one semester or over a summer break) and are often unpaid, while "co-op" programs can last up to two years, and students often serve as paid apprentices or trainees.[10] Both types of programs often are guided by learning goals or by some type of classroom or seminar reflection. Student participation in both cases is weighted heavily toward the junior or senior year.

INTERNSHIPS

- By 1990, 23 percent of students who enrolled as freshmen in 1986 had served as interns, according to the followup of the *American Freshman* survey (Wingard et al., 1991). This survey provides the best national estimate of the proportion of students participating in internships.
- The proportion of students participating in internships differs somewhat by institution type (Wingard et al., 1991). For instance:
  - —Students at two-year institutions were slightly less likely than those at four-year colleges to intern: 21 percent and 25 percent, respectively.
  - —However, more students at independent universities were interns than those at public universities (26 percent vs. 23 percent).
- As with student volunteers, female students are more likely than males to be interns (28 percent vs. 21 percent).
- Some studies indicate that the proportion of students participating in internships has increased. For instance, one survey of alumni from 16 independent colleges and universities found that just under 5 percent of alumni who attended college in the 1950s said they had been interns; this proportion rose to 9 percent in the 1960s group, to 20 percent in the 1970s group, and up to a high of 31 percent among those students who enrolled in the 1980s (Rhode, 1989).

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

- Each year, 250,000 college students work as "co-op" students, according to the Cooperative Education Association (CEA).
- Approximately 1,000 colleges and universities in the U.S. offer cooperative education experiences (CEA, 1992). Most of these programs are optional; however, some institutions, such as Northeastern University (MA), require students to participate in a co-op situation before graduating.
- The federal government is the largest employer of students in "co-ops," employing 18,000 students each year.
- In addition, the federal government funds co-op programs at colleges and universities through Title VIII of the Higher Education Act — with a total appropriation of $13. million in 1992 (CEA, 1992).
- CEA notes that co-op students on average earn $7,000 per year, and that 80 percent of co-op students receive an offer of full-time employment from one of their co-op employers.
- The Cooperative Education Research Center estimates that in 1990, students in cooperative education programs earned a total of $1.54 billion, and paid $204 million in income and Social Security taxes (CEA, 1992).

IMPLICATIONS

The number of students who work in the categories examined in this brief is expected to increase, as students continue to balance their financial needs with their desire to improve their career prospects. Paid employment, volunteer opportunities, and internship/cooperative situations all encourage students to apply classroom learning to "real world" situations. As such, these work situations offer a type of laboratory experience for undergraduates. The increasing numbers of undergraduates who participate in these types of work situations also help the nation reach an important National Education Goal: that by the year 2000, every American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

However, more research is needed to understand and evaluate the experience of working students in undergraduate programs. Although studies of the academic achievement of working students indicate few negative impacts, the increase in the number of students working and the hours they work suggest that previous studies on persistence and degree completion should be updated. Some observers are concerned that student progress may be hampered as students' working hours increase. Is there a point when student employment becomes a barrier to degree progress? How close are students to that point now?

Also, we need more longitudinal research on students involved in paid employment, community service work and internships. Few studies have looked at the long-term effects for college students who are paid employees, volunteers, or interns. Several questions must be addressed: Are these students more likely to succeed in their careers? Are students who participate in internships or co-ops more likely to find jobs in their field? Do these activities have any long-lasting effects on personal factors such as civic mindedness and social responsibility?

Other suggestions for research include: Given the high proportion of students who are working, would

these students be willing or interested in working on community service projects? Are the motives of students who work for pay different than those of students who volunteer or serve as interns? Can students who must work to support themselves or their families afford to accept minimum wage positions in community service?

Proposals for a federal plan offering financial aid in exchange for community service have generated a great deal of interest and controversy. Some observers have voiced concern that part-time students and working students may be hard-pressed to juggle the competing demands of work, study, and volunteering. The CSU survey and other student surveys seem to refute this notion, showing that part-time students are just as likely to participate in community service as full-time students, and that students who work are even more likely to volunteer. This leads to several questions: What are the real barriers to community service? Is there a time commitment threshold, where say three hours a week is too much for students to commit? Is there is a cutoff point at which a community service requirement could have a negative impact on part-time and working students?

With respect to the various proposals that have linked student aid with community service, the American Council on Education, on behalf of the higher education community, has recommended that the following basic elements be included in any national proposal:

- Service opportunities should be developed and encouraged for the benefits they provide to society and to the student's understanding of society. However, community service should be neither a replacement nor a condition for receiving need-based financial aid. It is fundamentally unfair to require lower-income students to perform service in order to accumulate resources while middle- and upper-income students can avoid it and go on to college.
- Service should be built upon the extensive community service activities already carried out in states and localities, educational institutions, and public interest organizations.
- Service opportunities should be encouraged before, during, and after college. Recognizing that undergraduates are a diverse group, service opportunities need to be varied and flexible so that all types of students will be able to participate in and be eligible for federal benefits.

Several advocates of community service and experiential education have called for a more thorough integration of such work into the college curriculum. Although supporters acknowledge that integrating service experiences into coursework requires more work of faculty, such a step is important because the student needs not only to perform the service, but also engage in guided reflection about its ethical, philosophical and social aspects, and thereby put the experience into perspective. Suggestions include offering academic incentives by expanding the number of courses that involve community service and increasing the number of business, engineering, and other science majors who participate in service activities by specifically designing experiential education courses in these fields (CSU, 1989).

As colleges and universities consider any changes or requirements in these areas, administrators must keep in mind student schedules and the need to balance academic demands, employment and service opportunities. For those who volunteer, how do they juggle the requirements of service and coursework if they are interested in doing an internship?

Colleges and universities may find that examining the opportunities for students to participate in service, internship, and paid positions could be an important step in refocusing an institution's mission. In a recent survey, more than half of all college presidents cited the importance of achieving the dual goals of building "a stronger overall sense of community" and creating "closer links between classroom and out-of-class activities" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching,1990). Sponsoring community service projects is an obvious way to meet both goals, but creating innovative internship and employment opportunities for students also could achieve these objectives.

ENDNOTES

1 Unfortunately, no single national study surveys students as to their participation in all three work categories (paid employment, volunteer work, and internships or cooperative positions). Therefore, the estimates provided here are not mutually exclusive.

2 BLS data is based on the Annual School Enrollment Status and Labor Force Participation of High School Graduates Survey.

3 NPSAS shows that, on average each month, 64 percent of undergraduates work while attending college, a slightly higher proportion than BLS data indicate. This probably is due to differences in data collection: NPSAS records student enrollment and employment for each month of the year, while BLS offers a single snapshot of enrollment and employment for the month of October. This research brief analyzed data for the month of February since it most closely resembled the average.

4 The National Center for Education Statistics defines independent students as students who are 24 years of age or older; veterans of the armed forces; graduate students not claimed as dependents by parents; students who are married, have dependents, or meet other specific criteria.

5 Actually, almost 28 percent of undergraduates surveyed by NPSAS said they performed community service; however, just under 2 percent also noted that a court order mandated their service.

6 Possible reasons for the range of volunteer participation rates include differences in the actual populations and definition problems. For example, the NPSAS sample represents all postsecondary students (including those at proprietary schools), while the *American Freshman* survey and its followup focus on full-time students. With respect to definitions, both the NPSAS and the *American Freshman* surveys simply asked students about

participating in community service or volunteer work, without providing strict definitions or examples. The CSU survey defined community service as "all work or service provided by individuals, campus organizations, public or private community agencies, or businesses that contributes to the quality of life in the community. Such work may be voluntary, for pay, or for course credit." To help students further, the CSU survey also provided several examples of such service.

[7] The authors of the CSU study note that the student body of the 20 CSU campuses resembles the overall U.S. undergraduate population.

[8] The CSU report also notes that the high percentage of volunteers among education majors "is most likely attributable to the student teaching requirement associated with elementary/secondary teaching programs."

[9] The $7.4 billion total is expected to cover the costs of administering service programs, along with stipends, health and child care benefits, post-service benefits, loan forgiveness and the establishment of income-contingent loans for participants.

[10] In addition, because of the length of co-op programs, students usually take an additional year to complete their degree programs.

RESOURCES

1) The U.S. Department of Education is the primary source of national data on students who work. The two main offices that provide statistics on working students include:

   The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducts the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), which collects data on student financial aid for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, surveying both aided and non-aided students. The survey is conducted on a biennial basis, the most recent completed in 1992 (data has not been released on that year's survey yet). NPSAS supplies information on students' employment and enrollment status, financial aid, and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. For more information, contact Drew Malizio, Longitudinal Studies Branch, National Center for Education Statistics, 555 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20208. Also of interest from NCES is the 1988 report *College Students Who Work: 1980-1984 Analysis Findings from High School and Beyond*, by C. Dennis Carroll and Terisita L. Chan-Kopka. For more information, contact C. Dennis Carroll, NCES, 555 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20208.

   The Office of Postsecondary Education administers and collects data on the Federal Work-Study program. For more information, contact the Campus Based Programs Branch Chief, U.S. Department of Education, 7th and D Streets SW, Room 4004, Washington, DC 20202-5175.

   In addition, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education in the Education Department administers the program for Innovative Projects for Student Community Services, providing grants to institutions for service projects and for research on the effects of student community service organizations. For more information, contact Jay Donohue, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 7th and D Streets SW, Room 3100, Washington, DC 20202-5175.

2) The Commission on National and Community Service, established through the 1990 National and Community Service Act, is funding and collecting data on community service projects at the secondary and postsecondary education levels. The commission awards grants in four areas: service projects targeted at secondary students; innovative programs for higher education; youth corps programs; and programs that could serve as models for a national service program. For more information, contact The Commission on National and Community Service, 529 14th Street NW, Suite 452, Washington, DC 20045, (202) 724-0600.

3) *The American Freshman* surveys, conducted annually by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, offer insight on first-time, full-time freshman plans for work and volunteering, among many other issues. The followup surveys, completed periodically, also show students' reported participation in work, volunteer and intern activities. For more information, contact the Higher Education Research Institute, Graduate School of Education, 320 Monroe Hall, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1521, (310) 825-1925.

4) The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), formerly the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education, is committed to fostering the effective use of work experience as an integral part of education. An association of individuals, institutions and organizations, NSEE publishes a bimonthly newsletter (*Experiential Education*), a directory of internships, and a three-volume series titled *Combining Service and Learning* (the third volume is an annotated bibliography). In addition, NSEE sponsors conferences and runs a clearinghouse, and will be conducting a national survey to estimate the number of student volunteers and interns. For more information, contact the National Society for Experiential Education, 3509 Haworth Dr., Suite 207, Raleigh, NC 27609, (919) 787-3263.

5) Campus Compact: the Project for Public and Community Service is a coalition of 340 college and university presidents helping students develop the values and skills of civic participation through involvement in public service. Campus Compact is a project of the Education Commission of the States; several examples of members' service programs are listed in its *1991-92 National Members' Survey and Resource Guide*. Campus Compact also publishes several guides that focus on issues such as increasing faculty involvement in public service, developing statewide coalitions for community service, implementing service programs with mentoring components, etc. For more information, contact Campus Compact, Box 1975, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912, (401) 863-1119.

6) The Partnership for Service Learning is a consortium of colleges, universities, service agencies and related organizations united to foster and develop service-learning in higher learning. The Partnership runs for-credit, off-campus service learning programs at 11 centers located throughout the world. In 1992, 180 students from the 150 member colleges were enrolled in these programs, which are very similar to semester-abroad programs, with students working a minimum of 20 hours each week in service activities (e.g., tutoring local students or teaching English in the local schools) as well as taking liberal arts courses. For more information, contact the Partnership for Service Learning, 815 Second Ave., Suite 315, New York, NY 10017, (212) 986-0989.

7) The National Association of Student Employment Administrators represents institutional officials who supervise student employment, including those who participate in the Federal Work-Study program. The association conducts research and sponsors an annual conference, held each October. For more information, contact the National Association of Student Employment Administrators, c/o Student Employment Office, Princeton University, 208 W. College, Princeton, NJ 08544-0591, (609) 258-1404.

8) Two main organizations serve the interests of cooperative education: the Cooperative Education Association (CEA) and the National Commission on Cooperative Education (NCCE). CEA represents agencies and offices on college and university campuses that coordinate student cooperative experiences. CEA conducts research on cooperative experiences and publishes a directory of such programs. For more information, contact the Cooperative Education Association, 11710 Beltsville Dr., Suite 520, Beltsville, MD 20705, (301) 572-2329. NCCE focuses on developing and marketing innovative cooperative education programs, from the perspectives of both employers and institutions of higher education. The commission also offers training to institutional administrators and faculty interested in establishing or reorganizing co-op programs. For more information, contact the National Commission on Cooperative Education, 501 Stearns Center, 360 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115, (617) 437-3770.

9) In addition, several other organizations encourage and promote service and volunteer opportunities, as well as provide technical assistance to institutions or individuals interested in establishing volunteer programs. These include:

- Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL), 386 McNeal Hall, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108-1011, (612) 624-3018.
- Youth Service America, 1319 F St. NW, Washington, DC 20004, (202) 296-2992.
- National Youth Leadership Council, 1910 W. County Road B, Roseville, MN 55113, (612) 631-3672.

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